



State Legislative Update for the Week of February 9 -13, 2015

Monday, February 9, 2015

Senate Session

Bill introductions of veterans interest:

Senator Housley introduced:

SF 617: A bill for an act relating to the military; establishing Military Spouses and Families Day; proposing coding for new law in Minnesota Statutes, chapter 10. Referred to the Committee on State and Local Government.

Senators Sheran, Eken, Clausen, Rosen and Weber introduced:

SF 653: A bill for an act relating to higher education; establishing a veterans-to-agriculture pilot program; appropriating money. Referred to the Committee on Finance.

House Session

Bill introductions of veterans interest:

Anderson, P.; Newton; Kresha; Anderson, M., and Franson introduced:

HF 673: A bill for an act relating to veterans; appropriating money for a grant to Stearns County for administrative funding to support a group residential housing services provider serving veterans. The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Veterans Affairs Division.

Howe introduced:

HF 705: A bill for an act relating to taxation; property; providing a reduced classification rate for property of a congressionally chartered veterans organization; amending Minnesota Statutes 2014, section 273.13, subdivision 25. The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Veterans Affairs Division.

Bernardy introduced:

HF 729: A bill for an act relating to transportation; providing for disability parking for vehicles bearing special World War II veteran plates; amending Minnesota Statutes 2014, sections 169.345, subdivisions 1, 2; 169.346, subdivision 1. The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Veterans Affairs Division.

Anderson, P.; Newton; Kresha; Anderson, M., and Franson introduced:

HF 740: A bill for an act relating to veterans; providing a grant from the Support Our Troops account to Eagle's Healing Nest.

The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on State Government Finance.

Committee Hearings

Committee: House Veterans Affairs Division

Chair: Rep. Bob Dettmer

Agenda:

HF 141 (Dettmer): Veteran-owned small business certification modified for purposes of state procurement, contract bid preference required for veteran-owned small businesses in situations involving capital investment projects, and money appropriated. This bill makes a variety of changes to the law governing bid-preferences available to veteran-owned small businesses and appropriates \$100,000 to develop and fund a certification program for veteran-owned small businesses. Language modifies the criteria that the Department of Administration must follow in certifying Minnesota veteran-owned small businesses, requires county boards and local units of government to implement a bid-preference program for veteran-owned businesses for capital projects that use state funds, and directs cities to award a six-percent preference in public infrastructure projects. The bill was amended and re-referred to the State Government Finance Committee.

HF 147 (Dettmer): Surviving spouses of deceased service members and permanently disabled veterans market value exclusion extended. This bill provides that the surviving spouse of (a) a permanently and totally disabled veteran or (b) a service member who dies due to a service-related cause, will receive the \$300,000 homestead market value exclusion each year, until the spouse remarries or disposes of the property. Under current law, this benefit to the surviving spouse expires after eight years. The bill was re-referred to the Property Tax and Local Government Finance Division.

HF 299 (Heintzeman): Military retirement pay subtraction provided. This bill allows an income tax subtraction for the full amount of military retirement pay. The subtraction would apply to retirement pay for service in the active component of the military, for retirement pay for service in the reserve component, and for survivor benefit plan payments. It also provides for the military retirement pay allowed as a subtraction to be subtracted from the alternative minimum taxable income. This is necessary to avoid shifting individuals who claim the subtraction onto the alternative minimum tax. The effective date is tax year 2015. The bill was referred to the Tax Committee.

Tuesday, February 10, 2015

Committee Hearings

Committee: House Taxes

Chair: Rep. Greg Davids

Agenda:

HF 10 (Wills): Veterans jobs tax credit provided. This bill provides employers with a nonrefundable income tax credit for hiring qualified veterans. The credit equals ten percent of the wages paid to the veteran, and the maximum credit is \$3,000 for each disabled veteran hired, \$1,500 for each unemployed veteran hired, and \$500 for each other veteran hired. A disabled veteran is a veteran with a service connected disability rating from the USVA; an unemployed veteran is a veteran who has received unemployment compensation at any time within two years preceding the date of hire and who was unemployed when hired. Disallows the credit if the employer currently employs or has previously employed the veteran. The bill was laid over for possible inclusion in the Omnibus Tax bill.

HF 137 (Dettmer): Military retirees and survivors allowed a subtraction from taxable income. This bill allows a new income tax subtraction for individuals who receive military retirement pay (both retirees and their survivors). The subtraction equals \$1,500 for each year or portion of a year of active service, up to a maximum of \$30,000. The subtraction is not limited to the amount of military retirement pay received. In the case of married spouses who file jointly, each spouse can claim this subtraction. Those individuals currently eligible for the nonrefundable tax credit of \$750 allowed for individuals with at least 20 years of service or who separated from the military with a service-connected disability and their survivors would be eligible for the subtraction. The credit equals \$750 and is phased out for those with adjusted gross income from \$30,000 to \$37,500. The option is available to take either the \$750 tax credit or the subtraction, whichever will provide the most benefit. The bill was laid over for possible inclusion in the Omnibus Tax bill.

Thursday, February 12, 2015

Senate Session

Bill introductions of veterans interest:

Senator Westrom introduced:

SF 709: A bill for an act relating to veterans; appropriating money for a grant to Stearns County for administrative funding to support a group residential housing services provider serving veterans.

Referred to the Committee on Finance.

Senator Westrom introduced:

SF 711: A bill for an act relating to veterans; providing a grant from the Support Our Troops account to Eagle's Healing Nest.

Referred to the Committee on Finance.

Senator Wiger introduced:

SF 714: A bill for an act relating to creative freedom; adopting the Creative Freedom Act; regulating employee invention agreements for veterans; amending Minnesota Statutes 2014, section 181.78, by adding a subdivision.

Referred to the Committee on Jobs, Agriculture and Rural Development.

Senators Metzen and Dahle introduced:

SF 732: A bill for an act relating to taxation; individual income; allowing a phase in for subtraction for Social Security benefits; amending Minnesota Statutes 2014, sections 290.01, subdivision 19b; 290.091, subdivision 2.

Referred to the Committee on Taxes.

Senator Senjem introduced:

SF 756: A bill for an act relating to veterans; appropriating money to design and construct a memorial honoring South Vietnamese veterans.

Referred to the Committee on Finance.

Senators Chamberlain and Newman introduced:

SF 776: A bill for an act relating to veterans; appropriating money to design and construct a memorial honoring South Korean veterans.

Referred to the Committee on Finance.

Senators Anderson, Newman and Chamberlain introduced:

SF 791: A bill for an act relating to veterans; appropriating money to design and construct a memorial honoring Khmer veterans of Cambodia.

Referred to the Committee on Finance.

Senators Anderson, Newman and Chamberlain introduced:

SF 792: A bill for an act relating to veterans; appropriating money to design and construct a memorial honoring certain United States veterans.

Referred to the Committee on Finance.

Senators Newman, Chamberlain and Anderson introduced:

SF 798: A bill for an act relating to veterans; appropriating money to design and construct a memorial honoring veterans of New Zealand.

Referred to the Committee on Finance.

Senators Saxhaug, Carlson, Gazelka and Anderson introduced:

SF 805: A bill for an act relating to natural resources; modifying conditions for state park passes issued without a fee to active military personnel and disabled veterans; amending Minnesota Statutes 2014, section 85.053, subdivisions 8, 10.

Referred to the Committee on Environment and Energy.

Under Executive and Official Communications, Senator Tom Saxhaug, Chair, State Departments and Veterans Division notified the President of the Senate, Sandra Pappas, that the Senate State Department and Veterans Division has formed the Veterans and Military Affairs Subdivision. The subdivision's membership is as follows: Senator Carlson, Chair; Senator Anderson, Republican Lead; Senators Gazelka, Metzen and Stumpf.

House Session

Bill introductions of veterans interest:

Howe and Heintzeman introduced:

HF 745: A bill for an act relating to veterans preference; modifying certain procedures and rights related to veterans preference; amending Minnesota Statutes 2014, section 197.46.

The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Veterans Affairs Division.

Atkins introduced:

HF 746: A bill for an act relating to taxation; individual income; allowing a phase in for subtraction for Social Security benefits; amending Minnesota Statutes 2014, sections 290.01, subdivision 19b; 290.091, subdivision 2.

The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Aging and Long-Term Care Policy.

Lucero, Howe, Hancock, Dettmer, Persell and Drazkowski introduced:

HF 767: A bill for an act relating to game and fish; exempting veterans from firearms safety certificate requirement; amending Minnesota Statutes 2014, section 97B.020; repealing Minnesota Statutes 2014, section 97B.015, subdivision 5a.

The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Mining and Outdoor Recreation Policy.

Dettmer, Newton, Lueck, Howe, Persell, Wills and Ward introduced:

HF 841: A bill for an act relating to higher education; granting resident status for purposes of higher education grants and scholarships to members of the state's National Guard who reside in the state; amending Minnesota Statutes 2014, section 136A.101, subdivision 8.

The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Veterans Affairs Division.

**Upcoming Committee Hearings of Veterans Interest
Week of February 16 -20, 2015**

Monday, February 16, 2015

Committee: Senate Health, Human Services and Housing

Chair: Sen. Kathy Sheran

Room: 15 Capitol

Time: 12:00 PM

Agenda:

SF 504 (Wiklund): Military members expedited temporary health licensing establishment.

Committee: House Veterans Affairs Division

Chair: Rep. Bob Dettmer

Room: 200 State Office Building

Time: 12:45 PM

Agenda:

HF 125 (Dettmer): Veteran jobs tax credit provided.

HF 312 (Dettmer): Military retirement pay subtraction phase-in provided.

HF 501 (Fenton): Military and overseas voting provisions modified.

HF 406 (O'Driscoll): Community safety personnel training about use of de-escalation techniques funding provided.

HF 260 (Lesch): Uniform Deployed Parents Custody and Visitation Act established and modified.

Tuesday, February 17, 2015

Committee: House State Government Finance

Chair: Rep. Sarah Anderson

Room: 200 State Office Building

Time: 8:15 AM

Agenda:

HF 283 (Kresha): Camp Ripley nearby lands designated as sentinel landscape, coordinating committee created, and report required.

Continued Presentation of the Governor's Budget

Department of Military Affairs, Don Kerr, Executive Director

Wednesday, February 18, 2015

Committee: House State Government Finance

Chair: Rep. Sarah Anderson

Room: 200 State Office Building

Time: 8:15 AM

Agenda:

Continued Presentation of the Governor's Budget: Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs